



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Dust



Did you know?

Dust can be contaminated with lead and other harmful toxics. These can come from sources such as traffic, industry, farming, and household chemicals. Young children are exposed to more dust because they put their hands and other objects in their mouths frequently and spend a lot of time on the floor. Too much dust can worsen allergies, asthma, or other health problems.



Do

- Frequently clean children's toys and items they put in their mouths with soap and water.
- At least weekly, wipe surfaces with wet microfiber cloths. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter
- If your kitchen has a range hood, use it on while cooking to reduce air pollution.
 - You can also use a fan or open windows.
- If you have a HVAC (heating ventilation and air conditioning or "central air") system use filters with high MERV rating numbers (at least "MERV 13") to trap toxics.
 - If not, use a portable HEPA air filter. Change the filter every 3-6 months.
- If your home was built before the 1980's, consider testing for lead.
 - If lead is found, do not allow children to touch high dust areas such as windowsills. Wipe these surfaces frequently with a microfiber cloth. Consider professionals to remove lead paint.
- Use barriers to contain dust if you have construction in your home.
- To decrease allergens:
 - Place pillows and mattresses in "hypoallergenic" covers
 - Wash sheets and blankets weekly in hot water.



Don't

- Don't smoke inside. Highly toxic chemicals from smoke stay in the air and stick on surfaces.
- Don't leave windows open if:
 - You live in a dusty or sandy area
 - Outside air quality is poor
 - There is construction, heavy traffic, or smoke nearby
- Don't wear shoes inside. Use a doormat and leave shoes at the door.
- Don't wear work clothes inside especially if you work in industry, construction or farming. Wash work clothes separately.
- Don't use pesticide sprays. Traps and baits reduce the unintended spread of these toxic chemicals.
 - To reduce pests, starve them out, dry them out and keep them out!



For more information, scan the code or visit: <https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/projects/prescriptions-for-prevention>

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